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## CURRENT LITERATURE.

*Select Extra-tropical Plants* readily eligible for industrial culture or naturalization. By Baron Ferd. von Mueller. 8vo. 450 pp. Geo. S. Davis, Detroit, Mich., 1884.

This is a book of great value to all engaged in cultivating plants, and of great interest to every botanist. Its author has long been recognized as a leader in this sort of work, and his success at the Melbourne Botanic Garden is well known. This book is no new thought, but rather an enlargement and adaptation for North America of what has already been done by the same author for less extensive regions. Published by an enterprising American publisher, it is to be hoped his risk will be justified by the generous response of all interested in the subject. Species are arranged in alphabetical order, regardless of family relations, but the relative importance of families for industrial culture is pointed out in a special table at the end of the book. The notes under each species are very concise and well selected, in view of the fact that they could have been almost indefinitely extended. Range, use and treatment are the subjects considered, and not scientific characters. It is to be hoped that this book will greatly stimulate the desire for cultivating a much greater variety of plants, for it surely furnishes every convenience for their judicious selection. A geographic index is quite a feature, by means of which plants from any geographical division can be readily selected. A grouping of genera under their uses is also very instructive; such groupings as "Alimentary Plants" (subdivided according to the part used, such as herbage, root, esculent fruits, etc.), "Condiment Plants," "Fodder-Plants," "Honey-Plants," "Medicinal Plants," "Scenic Plants," etc., being used. In the systematic index of genera it is interesting to note the relative importance of families in this respect. *Gramineae* heads the list with 77 genera; then *Leguminosae* with 73; *Compositae* 37; *Palmaceae* 34; *Umbelliferae* 32; *Liliaceae* 20; *Labiatae* 20, and so on, Dicotyledons and Monocotyledons successively vieing with each other in the display of useful genera. Owing to the much greater number of families, of course Dicotyledons eventually outnumber Monocotyledons; but the two great families, *Gramineae* and *Leguminosae* stand preeminently above all others in their relation to man's needs.

*Preliminary List of the Parasitic Fungi of Wisconsin.* By William Trelease. From Trans. Wisconsin Acad. Sci., vol. vi. 40 pp.

The author modestly calls this a provisional list and as such he intends to make it. It contains about 270 species, several of which are new, on about the same number of host-plants, mostly phænogams. Most of the species have been collected about Madison by the author, assisted by Mr. L. H. Pammel, a special laboratory student. This list will be very rapidly increased by a few seasons' collecting, and it is a move in exactly the right direction. As our state lists of the more prominent plants have been for the most part completed, what is more interesting or important than a catalogue of the parasitic fungi? Such lists can be valuable or worthless, and as competent cryptogamic botanists are as yet comparatively few in number, it is doubtful whether many states should attempt such a catalogue. But when a man of Prof. Trelease's experience and connections comes into an unexplored state it would be a shame if such work was not done. An index of host-plants is given and is so invaluable in such a catalogue that there should never be even a thought of omitting it. The botanists of Wisconsin should send Prof. Trelease specimens from all parts of the state, that the list may be made as quickly and as complete as possible.